

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. Claims 1-22 are pending.

The Examiner has required election in this application among the claims of:

Group I      Claims 1-3, drawn to the ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1);

Group II      Claims 4-10 and 18-22, drawn to the method for producing the ribonucleic acid in claims 1-3; and

Group III      Claims 11-17, drawn to the liquid phase synthetic method for an oligonucleotide compound represented by general formula (4).

In order to be fully responsive, Applicant hereby elects the claims of Group II (i.e., claims 4-10 and 18-22) for further prosecution. However, Applicant respectfully traverse this restriction requirement and request that the claims of Group I be examined together with the claims of Group II because all of these claims call for the same ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1). Thus, a search for the ribonucleic acid compound called for in the claims of Group I would be co-extensive with a search for methods of producing that same ribonucleic acid compound called for in the claims of Group II, and it would not place a serious burden on the Examiner to examine these groups of claims together. When the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine the application on the merits, even if it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. *See MPEP § 803.* The present restriction requirement is hereby traversed on the grounds that it would not place a serious burden on the Examiner to search the product claims of Group I together with the process claims of Groups II.

An early and favorable action on the merits of the application is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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